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**DRAFT GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN/  
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT  
Petersburg National Battlefield  
Petersburg, Virginia  
2004  
Abstract**

**T**his Draft General Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (GMP/EIS) presents an exciting vision for the future of Petersburg National Battlefield. This document also describes the environment that will be affected, and the environmental consequences of implementing each of the alternatives. Alternative A continues the current management direction of the park and constitutes the no-action alternative. Alternative B directs the park's priorities towards the preservation of nationally significant battlefield resources both inside and outside the park. Under this alternative, the boundary would expand by 7,238 acres and maximize partnerships with the communities and other Civil War organizations to protect remaining nationally significant battlefields that have a high degree of integrity. Visitors would continue to use the existing visitor center for orientation and interpretive activities. The visitor contact station at Five Forks Battlefield is removed and relocated. Themes would be expanded to tell the broader stories of the Petersburg Campaign. Alternative C creates dynamic interpretation with resources geared towards interactive and animated programs using modern technology where appropriate, the latest interpretive tools and an upgraded interpretive center. There is a limited boundary expansion of 2,030 acres for protecting existing resources. Visitors can begin their experience at any of the five units with new themes, and expanded programs and facilities developed at Grant's Headquarters at City Point, the Home Front in Old Town Petersburg, Poplar Grove National Cemetery and Five Forks Battlefield. Partnerships that protect nationally significant battlefields outside the park's boundary are emphasized. Under Alternative D, the cultural landscape is the mechanism by which the Civil War stories are told. A boundary expansion of 7,238 acres would preserve nationally significant battlefields, protect existing park resources and create opportunities for visitors to access these significant Civil War landscapes and resources. Selected earthworks, viewsheds and landscapes would be rehabilitated to reflect their 1864/1865 appearance. Similar to Alternative C, visitors can begin their experience at any of the five units with new themes, and expanded programs and facilities developed at Grant's Headquarters at City Point, the Home Front in Old Town Petersburg, Poplar Grove National Cemetery and Five Forks Battlefield.

The public review period will last for 60 days after the publication of a Notice of Availability in the Federal Register. Comments on this draft document should be directed in writing to the Superintendent, Petersburg National Battlefield, 1539 Hickory Hill Road, Petersburg, Virginia, 23803. Comments may be submitted electronically at [pete\\_gmp@nps.gov](mailto:pete_gmp@nps.gov). Please note that names and addresses of people who comment become part of the public record. If you wish for us to withhold your name and/or address, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comment. We will make all submissions from organizations, businesses, and individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses available for public inspection in their entirety.

For further information regarding this document, please contact the Superintendent, at Petersburg National Battlefield at the above address or call (804) 732-3571 extension 105 or visit the park through the web site at [www.nps.gov/pete](http://www.nps.gov/pete).



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# DRAFT GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN/ ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

## SUMMARY

Petersburg National Battlefield does not currently have a General Management Plan. The park's existing Master Plan (1965) was primarily a facilities development plan. The current Master Plan provides no long-range guidance on such issues as related lands outside the park, the management of new park areas, or revisions to operations and programming activities. All of its major recommendations have been completed. In the intervening 38 years, Petersburg NB transferred park land to the city of Petersburg, added two new units, undertook minor boundary adjustments, and identified battlefield lands critical to the park's mission that lie outside its boundaries. At the same time, the park has experienced threats to physical resources and to the visitor experience from incompatible residential, commercial and industrial development along park borders. Finally, over the past quarter century, modern scholarship and changing public values have revealed limitations in the current visitor experience and the need for new interpretive themes.

The Draft General Management Plan (GMP) presents and analyzes four alternatives for preserving resources, enhancing interpretation, providing visitor services and working with partners. It responds to the park's mission and the challenges facing the park and adjacent communities today. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) has been prepared to satisfy the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended, which requires the evaluation of potential impacts resulting from federal actions. It includes a description of the environment affected by the proposed activities and the environmental consequences of implementing any of the alternatives.

Alternative A, the no action alternative, identifies the current management direction and provides a baseline with which to compare the other alternatives, as required by the National Environmental Policy Act. It retains the management guidance and direction of the 1965 Master Plan, including its identification of significant resources, its boundaries as modified by legislation, and its policies for battlefields and historic properties. The visitor experience begins with an overview of the events at the Eastern Front and continues with a tour of the NPS sites: major fortifications, portions of four battlefields and the Appomattox Manor. This alternative focuses on the existing park resources and relies entirely on NPS to conserve resources, interpret the story and develop and manage the facilities. Partnerships continue to be developed with individuals, organizations or agencies to conserve Civil War resources outside the park.

Under Alternative B, the park places the highest value for staffing and financial resources on battlefield preservation both inside and outside current park boundaries. A boundary expansion of 7,238 acres is proposed. The majority of the park's activities are directed towards protecting battlefield lands through easements, partnership efforts, landowner outreach and education efforts and direct purchase. The historical and contextual importance of Petersburg,



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the surrounding battlefield lands, and the need to protect the "blood-soaked ground" for future generations is emphasized in expanded interpretive themes. Visitor interpretation and services currently underway remain as is, with an added layer regarding the importance of the park's preservation efforts and strategies. Educational outreach targets both students and adults for innovative learning. Visitors continue to use the Eastern Front visitor center as the main point of entry and orientation. Since the highest concentration of important battlefields is located here, visitor contact and resources can be maximized. Appomattox Manor provides limited visitor services. The visitor contact station at Five Forks Battlefield is removed and relocated. Partnerships that promote battlefield preservation receive the most consideration in terms of outreach and staff efforts. Technical assistance to surrounding localities and local landowners are an integral part of the park's advocacy role in achieving resource protection.

Alternative C focuses the park's priorities on creating dynamic interpretation with resources geared towards interactive and animated programs using modern technology where appropriate, the latest interpretive tools, and staff. There is a limited boundary expansion of 2,030 acres for protecting existing resources and providing better access for interpretation. A more complete Civil War understanding is emphasized—causes of, experience during, and reconciliation after the war including relevance of the war to people today. The existing visitor center is upgraded to provide for more interpretive media and exhibits. Visitors begin and are oriented to the Petersburg Campaign at any of the five park units. At each unit, a full and comprehensive interpretive program is available, with each unit's story explained within the Campaign. New programs and expanded facilities are developed at Grant's Headquarters at City Point, the Home Front in Old Town Petersburg, Poplar Grove National Cemetery and Five Forks Battlefield. Partnerships with Civil War organizations and sites are the mechanism by which nationally significant battlefields outside the park's boundary are preserved. Park staff provides technical assistance and increases its advocacy role in the community. Partnerships with scholars, historians and educational institutions are also pursued.

In Alternative D, the cultural landscape is the mechanism by which the Civil War stories are told. A boundary expansion of 7,238 acres preserves nationally significant battlefields, protects existing park resources and creates opportunities for visitors to access these significant Civil War landscapes and resources. The interpretive program is dynamic and interactive, conveying a more comprehensive Civil War story by making full use of battlefield resources. The visitor experience is much more compelling, as they are immersed in the landscape upon which battles were fought. Efforts by which NPS and others are protecting battlefields and other Civil War-related resources are emphasized. Visitors can begin and be fully oriented at any of the five park units. At each unit, a full and comprehensive interpretive program is available, with each unit's story explained within the campaign. New programs and expanded facilities are developed at Grant's Headquarters at City Point, the Home Front in Old Town Petersburg, Poplar Grove National Cemetery and Five Forks Battlefield. Partnerships with localities and organizations that promote battlefield preservation and further Civil War education and interpretation are pursued.



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## **THIS PLAN IS DIVIDED INTO FIVE CHAPTERS:**

### **Chapter 1: The Purpose & Need for Action**

Sets forth the park's purpose, significance and mission goals; describes the history of the park area; summarizes the current situation; and outlines the goals and decision points that will be addressed during the management planning stage.

### **Chapter 2: The Management Alternatives**

Describes the no-action alternative and three action alternatives under consideration, including action examples. It also briefly describes several alternatives that were considered but rejected.

### **Chapter 3: The Affected Environment**

Identifies the natural, cultural and socioeconomic environment and the infrastructure elements that may be affected by the implementation of any of the alternatives.

### **Chapter 4: Environmental Consequences**

Describes the impacts that could result from the implementation of any of the alternatives.

### **Chapter 5: Consultation and Coordination**

Describes public participation and agency coordination as part of the planning process.

### **Appendix**

Includes additional information on legislation, cost estimates and selected references.